

# NBA Draft

Thursday, June 22, 2023

Brooklyn, New York, USA

## Dereck Lively II



**Q. What will you bring to Dallas?**

DERECK LIVELY II: I'm bringing my mom. It's that simple.

**Q. Did Mark Cuban speak to you either tonight or before the draft? Do you think a Philadelphia guy is going to feel at home in Big D as opposed to Oklahoma City?**

DERECK LIVELY II: I definitely feel like I can make it happen. I feel like I can definitely see myself having a great time in Dallas and being a great fit. I was just on the phone with him less than two minutes ago. He was just saying, "Congratulations and we're just excited to have you and we're excited to start," which is exactly the same exact feeling I'm feeling.

**Q. I'm just wondering, you over the course of your career were very much focused on sort of defense and being the big guy and blocking shots and all that stuff. I think on your mother's advice, kind of diversifying your game. You didn't really get to show it as much in your freshman year. Do you think that's something that's going to grow a little bit more in the NBA?**

DERECK LIVELY II: That's definitely something that's going to be able to grow. It's something I've always had. Just because I wasn't able to excel at it or show it as much as I wanted to, that doesn't mean I never had it. I'm just excited to hit the ground running and show everybody what I can do.

**Q. What was it like actually hearing your name called? And what's your first draft memory? Who's the first guy you remember going, I remember watching that guy get drafted?**

DERECK LIVELY II: I've seen a lot of drafts over the years. Each year you kind of see, it seems that much closer. Whenever you finally hear your name on the screen, you hear it in the crowd, you hear it in the loud speakers, it's like a dream just getting started. My dream is not to get to the NBA but to stay in the NBA. It's kind of starting the ball rolling, and let's see where it goes.

**Q. Can you talk about what it's like coming from**

**Westtown? Mo Bamba, Cam Reddish, now you in the league. And not only that, Team Final, back-to-back lottery picks in back-to-back years?**

DERECK LIVELY II: You know, it's always been some form of competitive nature, not even on the East Coast, just in Philadelphia, having that grit, having that hustle and having that determination to do whatever it takes. No matter how hard the world will beat you down, you've got to get back up and fight twice as hard.

Whenever I think about Westtown, I think about when I was a freshman watching, I was probably 6'10", weighed 190. Even thinking about Team Final, I was probably 6'7", 170.

Just thinking about how far I've come and the people that came with me, I'm so grateful and I'm so thankful.

**Q. Could you talk a little bit about that transition from high school into professional.**

DERECK LIVELY II: Living at a high school -- I went to a boarding school, so I was always kind of living on my own and I was always able to do that. But being able to take basketball from a game that you enjoy and turning it into a business and your career, it takes not a step, it takes a leap. It just kind of takes the maturity you've got to have to be able to focus in on each practice, each film session, each game, and being able to try to get 1 percent better every day.

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